

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (cancelled)

2. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling comprising:

a joint member formed with a hole;

a hollow shaft member formed of a steel pipe received in the joint member;

an elastic member interposed radially between the joint member and the hollow shaft member to flex and deform upon relative rotation between the joint member and the hollow shaft member;

stopper portions provided, respectively, on the joint member and the hollow shaft member to restrict the relative rotation therebetween within a predetermined amount; and

the stopper portions provided on said joint member each including a pair of stopper faces spaced from each other in a peripheral direction to form a gap therebetween,

the stopper portions provided on said hollow shaft member each being radially outwardly projected into said gap formed between said stopper faces of the corresponding stopper portion provided on said joint member,

said stopper portions on said hollow shaft member being formed by plastically processing an end of the hollow shaft member to be projected radially outwardly, and

the stopper portions on said hollow shaft member being provided with ribs for reinforcement.

Claims 3 and 4 (cancelled)

5. (previously presented) A method of manufacturing a coupling element which is formed by interposing between a joint member and a hollow shaft member an elastic member for flexing and deforming upon a relative rotation between these members and forming stopper portions for restricting the relative rotation within a predetermined amount respectively on the joint member and the hollow shaft member, comprising the step of:

forming each of the stopper portions on said hollow shaft member into the shape of a flange while applying a pressing force in the axial direction onto said hollow shaft member.

6. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling according to Claim 2, wherein the outer diameter of the stopper portion on said hollow shaft member side is formed smaller than the outer diameter of the stopper portion on said joint member side.

7. (cancelled)

8. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 2, wherein said pipe is of a low carbon steel.

9. (currently amended) A method according to claim 5, wherein said hollow shaft member is ~~formed~~ of a low carbon steel pipe.

10. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling comprising:

a joint member formed with a hole;  
a hollow shaft member received in the joint member;  
an elastic member interposed radially between the  
joint member and the hollow shaft member to flex and deform  
upon relative rotation between the joint member and the  
hollow shaft member;

stopper portions provided, respectively, on the joint  
member and the hollow shaft member to restrict the relative  
rotation therebetween within a predetermined amount; and

the stopper portions provided on said joint member  
each including a pair of stopper faces spaced from each  
other in a peripheral direction to form a gap therebetween,

the stopper portions provided on said hollow shaft  
member each being radially outwardly projected into said  
gap formed between said stopper faces of the corresponding  
stopper portion provided on said joint member,

said stopper portions on said hollow shaft member  
being formed by flaring an end of the hollow shaft member  
to be projected radially outwardly.

11. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling  
according to claim 10, wherein said hollow shaft member is  
steel pipe of a low carbon steel.

12. (currently amended) An elastic shaft coupling comprising:

a joint member formed with a hole;

a hollow shaft member received in the joint member;

an elastic member interposed radially between the joint member and the hollow shaft member to flex and deform upon relative rotation between the joint member and the hollow shaft member;

stopper portions provided, respectively, on the joint member and the hollow shaft member to restrict the relative rotation therebetween within a predetermined amount; and

the stopper portions provided on said joint member each including a pair of stopper faces spaced from each other in a peripheral direction to form a gap therebetween,

the stopper portions provided on said hollow shaft member each being radially outwardly projected into said gap formed between said stopper faces of the corresponding stopper portion provided on said joint member,

said stopper portions on said hollow shaft member being formed by flaring an end of the hollow shaft member to be projected radially outwardly,

~~An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 10,~~  
wherein the stopper portions on said hollow shaft member  
are provided with ribs for reinforcement.

13. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling  
according to Claim 10, wherein the outer diameter of each  
said stopper portion on said hollow shaft member is  
formed smaller than the outer diameter of the  
corresponding stopper portion on said joint member.

14. (previously presented) An elastic shaft  
coupling according to claim 10, wherein radially  
outermost points of contact of the stopper portions on  
said hollow shaft member with the stopper faces on said  
joint member are disposed inwardly from respective  
centers of said stopper faces in a radial direction.

15. (previously presented) A method of  
manufacturing a coupling element which is formed by  
interposing between a joint member and a hollow shaft  
member an elastic member which flexes and deforms upon a  
relative rotation between these members and forming  
stopper portions which restrict the relative rotation

within a predetermined amount respectively on the joint member and the hollow shaft member, comprising the step of:

forming each of the stopper portions on said hollow shaft member by flaring an end of said hollow shaft member into the shape of a flange while applying a pressing force in the axial direction onto said hollow shaft member.

16. (currently amended) A method according to claim 15, wherein said hollow shaft member is formed of a low-carbon steel pipe.

17. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling comprising:

a joint member formed with a hole;

a hollow shaft member formed of a pipe received in the joint member, said pipe having an original wall thickness ( $t_2$ );

an elastic member interposed radially between the joint member and the hollow shaft member to flex and deform upon relative rotation between the joint member and the hollow shaft member;

stopper portions provided, respectively, on the joint member and the hollow shaft member to restrict the relative rotation therebetween within a predetermined amount; and

the stopper portions provided on said joint member each including a pair of stopper faces spaced from each other in a peripheral direction to form a gap therebetween,

the stopper portions provided on said hollow shaft member each being radially outwardly projected into said gap formed between said stopper faces of the corresponding stopper portion provided on said joint member,

said stopper portions on said hollow shaft member being formed by flaring an end of the hollow shaft member while applying axial pressure on said end to produce a root portion of the stopper portion on the hollow shaft member having an thickness ( $t_1$ ) greater than the original wall thickness ( $t_2$ ) of said hollow shaft member.

18. (currently amended) An elastic shaft coupling comprising:

a joint member formed with a hole;

a hollow shaft member formed of a pipe received in the joint member, said pipe having an original wall thickness ( $t_2$ );



an elastic member interposed radially between the joint member and the hollow shaft member to flex and deform upon relative rotation between the joint member and the hollow shaft member;

stopper portions provided, respectively, on the joint member and the hollow shaft member to restrict the relative rotation therebetween within a predetermined amount; and

the stopper portions provided on said joint member each including a pair of stopper faces spaced from each other in a peripheral direction to form a gap therebetween,

the stopper portions provided on said hollow shaft member each being radially outwardly projected into said gap formed between said stopper faces of the corresponding stopper portion provided on said joint member,

said stopper portions on said hollow shaft member being formed by flaring an end of the hollow shaft member while applying axial pressure on said end to produce a root portion of the stopper portion on the hollow shaft member having an thickness ( $t_1$ ) greater than the original wall thickness ( $t_2$ ) of said hollow shaft member,

~~An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 17,~~  
wherein the stopper portions on said hollow shaft member are provided with ribs for reinforcement.

19. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 17, wherein the outer diameter of each said stopper portion on said hollow shaft member is formed smaller than the outer diameter of the corresponding stopper portion on said joint member.

20. (currently amended) An elastic shaft coupling according to Claim 17, wherein only portions of radially inward halves of the faces of the stopper portions on said joint member are brought into contact with the faces of the stopper portions on said hollow shaft member in accordance with said relative rotation.

21. (previously presented) An elastic shaft coupling according to claim 17, wherein said pipe is of low carbon steel.

22. (previously presented) A method of manufacturing a coupling element which is formed by interposing between a joint member and a hollow shaft member an elastic member which flexes and deforms upon a relative rotation between these members and forming

stopper portions which restrict the relative rotation within a predetermined amount respectively on the joint member and the hollow shaft member, comprising the step of:

forming said stopper portions on said hollow shaft member by flaring an end of the hollow shaft member while applying axial pressure on said end to produce a root portion of each stopper portion on the hollow shaft member having a thickness ( $t_1$ ) greater than the original wall thickness ( $t_2$ ) of said hollow shaft member.

23. (currently amended) A method according to claim 22, wherein said hollow shaft member is ~~formed of~~ a low carbon steel pipe.